

House Higher Education Committee
COVID Questions
University of Texas at San Antonio
September 2020

1. Are institutions of higher education ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester? When applicable, please speak directly to classroom and lab settings, dormitories and dining halls.

- UTSA is ensuring the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff during the 2020 Fall Semester. UTSA's [Public Health Task Force](#) is overseeing the implementation of extensive safety measures to protect the health of the UTSA community, as outlined in their [report](#). UTSA's Public Health Task Force has been in place since May 2020 and helps guide UTSA on how best to protect the health of the UTSA community as an integral part planning for re-opening UTSA's campuses. Composed of experts and stakeholders across the university, this group is charged with gathering input from various external groups such as, but not limited to, UT System, the State of Texas, and local health officials on the best practices on protection and prevention policies associated with health considerations, facilities, and student life. UTSA's Public Health Task Force is critical to addressing the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff.
- Forty pages of the UTSA Public Health task Force Report include Guiding Principles on returning to campus, Protection and Prevention Policies and Protocols, Health Considerations, use of Teaching and Learning Spaces, Laboratories, Student housing, and campus dining facilities. UTSA encourages every member of our Roadrunner community to do our part and take necessary steps to minimize the risk of COVID-19 infections. This means adhering to national, state, and local health guidelines and requirements, as well as those measures UTSA deems safe and appropriate for the UTSA community. Measures include: (1) temperature checks, (2) social distancing, (3) wearing masks or other face coverings, (4) using other personal protective equipment (PPE), (5) not reporting to class or work if sick or exposed to others diagnosed with COVID-19, and (6) isolating and quarantining when required.
- **Courses/sections, classrooms settings (page 20)** that require in-person instruction will have reduced class size to achieve six (6) feet of separation between individuals. Options include additional sections, small classes in larger classrooms, and hybrid classes that have a virtual foundation with rotating in-person student groups. Face coverings (medical or non-medical grade) that fully cover both the nose and the mouth must be worn at all times by students, staff and faculty while in the classroom. Exceptions must follow university guidelines. See section III.A. above for further detail regarding requirements.
- **Laboratory and research facilities (page 23)** must follow the guidance per the recommendations of the UTSA Research Recovery Task Force. In a UTSA research laboratory setting, the director or supervisor of the laboratory or their designee (i.e., designated lab director) are responsible for ensuring that all personnel are abiding by occupancy and social distancing regulations. Laboratory supervisors should utilize the social distancing tool provided by UTSA and the occupancy and usage guidance checklist. Laboratories should adhere to stringent disinfecting protocols. Signage encouraging the use of protective measures should be posted.

- **Dormitories** -UTSA is requiring **all residents (page 24)** and staff to follow requirements and behavioral considerations for (1) monitoring of symptoms and exposure, (2) personal preventive measures, and (3) disinfecting protocols. An orientation/ training is required for residents and staff to complete prior to move-in. UTSA is scheduling move-in and move-out in a manner that allows for appropriate social distancing. UTSA has and will institute physical distancing and other infection prevention and control measures in student housing areas, as needed. Residents are being grouped into “family units.” All residents must regularly monitor for any COVID-19 related symptoms. If residents experience symptoms or come in close contact with someone infected with COVID-19 they must stay within their room and immediately contact their healthcare provider or UTSA Student Health Services. Housing and Residence Life has designated the Associate Director of Housing Operations as point of contact for COVID-19 concerns.
- **Dining halls (page 25)** - At UTSA the number of persons allowed in shared dining spaces will be limited and chairs/tables arranged in such a way to ensure social distancing measures, and outdoor dining is encouraged when possible. For students on a campus meal plan, dining services should arrange food delivery in collaboration with Housing and Residence Life staff, especially for students in quarantine or isolation. For in-person food services, it is highly recommended that meals be individually packaged. Buffet style dining will be limited or eliminated where possible. Dining staff and customers must wear face coverings when moving throughout facilities.

2. What plans are in place for on-campus COVID-19 testing? Do institutions have the capacity to provide testing on campus, both in terms of available supplies and labs to process tests?

UTSA will offer COVID-19 testing as follows:

Site/Laboratory	Capacity	Turnaround	Population
On Campus Test Site (Livingston Med Lab)	200 tests per day	Within 24 hours	Students, faculty and staff
UTSA Athletic Facility (UT Health)	125 tests per day	Within 24 hours	Athletes and Athletics Staff
On Campus Test Site (UT Health)	40 tests per day	Within 24 hours	Symptomatic students, faculty and staff
Student Health Services Clinic (Quest Diagnostics)	20 tests per day	Typically within 3 days	Symptomatic students

In addition, free COVID-19 testing is available through [San Antonio Metro Health](#).

3. If applicable, what are plans for collegiate athletics this fall? How will student athletes be kept safe? If fans will be permitted to attend events, how will fans be kept safe?

- UTSA Athletics implemented a [phased plan for student athletes](#) over the summer. Testing has been done weekly and will increase in frequency to three times per week for football once the season begins the week of Sept. 6.

- Athletics and sports medicine programs will ensure department policies, procedures, and communications regarding COVID-19 align with institutional, local, state, and federal public health guidelines. The NCAA core principles for resocialization and action planning considerations includes a phased approach to return to sports.
- UTSA will move forward with a football season in 2020. The department announced a fan attendance safety plan — <http://goUTSA.com/fanguidelines> — on Aug. 31 that was developed in conjunction with the City of San Antonio. The plan will allow attendance at a reduced capacity of 17% and with physical distancing measures. It follows all state and local health directives and focuses on risk mitigation strategies that promote the safety of student-athletes, fans and staff. Since the situation remains fluid and continues to evolve, the plan is subject to change based on emerging information as well as local and state health developments.

4. What do projected enrollment figures and formula funding look like to institutions for this school year?

Unofficially, this Fall 2020 semester UTSA projects an enrollment of approximately 34,500 students, compared to 32,594 last fall, thus reflecting a 5.8% increase. Semester credit hours are up also, similarly. These numbers will likely change by September 9, the official census date. UTSA's fall semester 2020 classes start with 95% of UTSA courses being offered online and 5% in-person in order to keep students and their families' safe while allowing them to continue their degree programs. Roughly, 4,000 UTSA classes will be offered, based on different modes of instructions. Although most classes will be online, about 200 of those classes will be conducted on campus. On a daily basis, UTSA expects about 754 students to be on campus, which is about 2% of total student enrollment. Classes taking place on campus will be spread out among 68 classrooms in 16 different buildings with no more 40 students to a class during the scheduled course period and staggered start times. Students and faculty are expected to keep on their masks while maintaining social distancing.

5. Has there been a noticeable impact on staff or faculty retention with regard to concerns about the pandemic?

UTSA continues to do as much as possible to retain as many faculty and staff positions to continue serving the needs of our students. The level of uncertainty with the pandemic and the financial impact on UTSA has necessitated budgeted expense reductions across every area of the university, including some reductions to our workforce. To meet UTSA's projected \$35.8 million revenue shortfall for the second year of the current biennium, UTSA had to implement difficult decisions on July 1, 2020.

From our workforce of 2,650 A&P and classified staff, UTSA had to eliminate 243 positions. This reduction in force affected 176 employees in management, administrative and other professional positions, and 67 employees in skilled labor positions. An additional four employees had a reduction in hours, and 137 vacant staff positions were eliminated. Affected positions cross all divisions of the university. The budget reduction process included many unit reorganizations resulting in the availability of 55 new staff positions. These positions were posted for internal UTSA applicants, and those staff whose positions were eliminated were encouraged to apply. A breakdown showing the number of positions eliminated in each area can be found [on our website](#).

Faculty Positions at UTSA were also impacted. Twelve vacant tenured/tenure-track faculty positions were eliminated. In addition, from our workforce of 700-plus non-tenure-track faculty, 69 faculty were informed that their college does not anticipate instructional need for this academic year. UTSA academic

appointments for this group of NTTs (equivalent to 34.5 full-time employees) ended on August 31, 2020. Because these instructors are hired on a semester-by-semester basis, they could be invited back to teach at any point based on need.

N/A 6. Health Related Institutions were exempt from the 5% budget cuts earlier this year, due to their important role in resolving the public health crisis. What are some of the programs, research, and responses to the pandemic that our Health Related Institutions have contributed?

7. How have state and federal COVID-related funds already affected budgets?

- CARES Act funding is being used primarily to [provide emergency aid directly to UTSA students](#) financially affected by the pandemic.
- UTSA has received \$31.7 million in federal funding from the CARES Act to respond to the adverse financial impacts of the pandemic. Per federal guidance, half of UTSA's CARES funding is being distributed directly to UTSA students needing emergency aid as a result of the pandemic. Fund distribution is underway for students who have already submitted an emergency aid application, and there still is funding available.
- Like most institutions of higher education, the pandemic is [impacting UTSA's revenue on multiple fronts](#).

N/A 8. How has the pandemic affected the overall financial status of small and rural community colleges?

9. Does your institution have a public, online dashboard for the reporting of positive COVID-19 cases which is updated daily? If so, what is the link to the dashboard?

UTSA continues to develop a plan to obtain data for what will soon be a public facing dashboard. Currently we are working with UT System to ensure a coordinated approach to posting a public dashboard.

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